



(U//FOUO) CRASH Team

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(S//SI) Follow-the-Money (S2C22)
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(S//SI) North Korea was already an important target for NSA in early 2003, receiving substantial attention and resources, when the State Department raised the interest level further: it issued a requirement for a new emphasis on regime finance and an increased emphasis on proliferation finance. In response, the Agency's Follow-the-Money Branch (S2C22) brought together experts from across a spectrum of disciplines and organizations in SID to focus on the problem. The resulting colocated team, known as the **North Korea CRASH (Combined Rapid Analysis and Synthesis Hit) Team**, uses financial intelligence collection and analysis methodologies against traditionally non-financial targets.

(S//SI) One key to the CRASH team's success has been its access to North Korean financial transaction data routed through foreign banks, a lucrative source for intelligence production and SIGINT Development (SIGDEV) efforts. The team has partnered with experienced analysts having target, analytic, language, and reporting expertise from five divisions across both the International Security Issues (S2C) and China and Korea (S2B) Product Lines to fully exploit this information.

(S//SI) What have we accomplished so far? We have...

- Created a database (a spreadsheet and several iterations) of North Korean financial assets held outside the country, giving a snapshot with a great deal of information in an easy-to-read format.
- Targeted leadership finance. This produced a significant amount of new non-financial intelligence on weapons shipments, trading and infrastructure developments, etc.
- Produced a stream of intelligence on mechanisms used to sell North Korean precious metals -- allegedly personally owned by North Korean leader Kim Chong-il.
- Identified North Korean regime vulnerabilities -- pressure points revealed by its concentration of financial activity in limited hands and locations.
- Produced a body of SIGINT reporting that helped U.S. policymakers curtail North Korea's banking presence in Europe.
- Isolated key regime relationships that were not evident in the traditional SIGINT analytic approach.
- Targeted financial institutions as collection targets in their own right. This revealed several instances of their complicity in North Korea's efforts to avoid scrutiny of its activities.

(S//SI) If you would like to learn more about these efforts, or know of new ways that CRASH can collaborate productively with your organization, we would like to hear from you! Contact [REDACTED], the Follow-the-Money Proliferation/Finance lead at [REDACTED]@nsa.

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